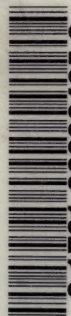


The Rough Rider
and Other Poems
by Bliss Carman



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The Rough Rider
and Other Poems

By the Same Author

In Verse

Pipes of Pan

Sappho: One Hundred Lyrics

Songs from Vagabondia

Collected Poems

In Prose

The Making of Personality

The Kinship of Nature

The Friendship of Art

The Poetry of Life

The Rough Rider and Other Poems

by
Bliss Carman



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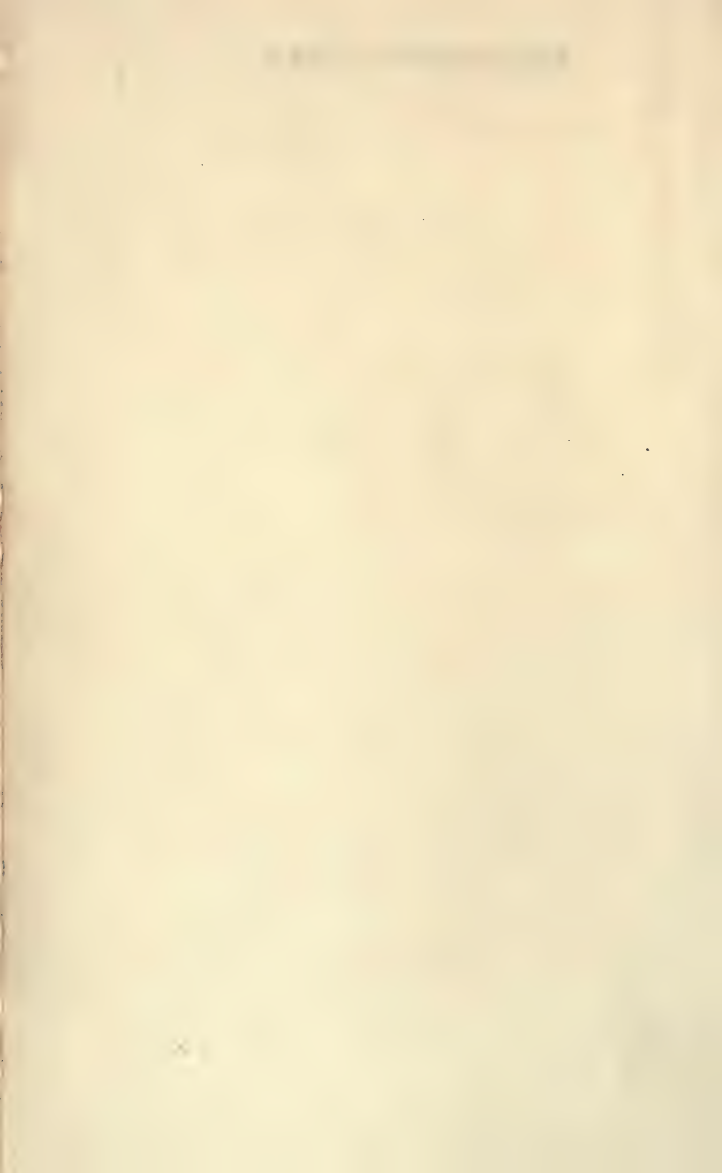
NEW YORK
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To
Theodore Roosevelt

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THE ROUGH RIDER



THE ANGELS OF MAN

THE word of the Lord of the outer worlds
Went forth on the deeps of space,
That Michael, Gabriel, Rafael,
Should stand before his face,
The seraphs of his threefold will,
Each in his ordered place.

Brave Michael, the right hand of God,
Strong Gabriel, his voice,
Fair Rafael, his holy breath
That makes the world rejoice,—
Archangels of omnipotence,
Of knowledge, and of choice;

Michael, angel of loveliness
In all things that survive,
And Gabriel, whose part it is
To ponder and contrive,
And Rafael, who puts the heart
In every thing alive.

Came Rafael, the enraptured soul,
Stainless as wind or fire,
The urge within the flux of things,
The life that must aspire,
With whom is the beginning,
The worth, and the desire;

THE ANGELS OF MAN

And Gabriel, the all-seeing mind,
Bringer of truth and light,
Who lays the courses of the stars
In their stupendous flight,
And calls the migrant flocks of spring
Across the purple night;

And Michael, the artificer
Of beauty, shape, and hue,
Lord of the forges of the sun,
The crucible of the dew,
And driver of the plowing rain
When the flowers are born anew.

Then said the Lord: "Ye shall account
For the ministry ye hold,
Since ye have been my sons to keep
My purpose from of old.
How fare the realms within your sway
To perfections still untold?"

Answered each as he had the word.
And a great silence fell
On all the listening hosts of heaven
To hear their captains tell,—
With the breath of the wind, the call of a bird,
And the cry of a mighty bell.

THE ANGELS OF MAN

Then the Lord said: "The time is ripe
For finishing my plan,
And the accomplishment of that
For which all time began.
Therefore on you is laid the task
Of the fashioning of man;

"In your own likeness shall he be,
To triumph in the end.
I only give him Michael's strength
To guard him and defend,
With Gabriel to be his guide,
And Rafael his friend.

"Ye shall go forth upon the earth,
And make there Paradise,
And be the angels of that place
To make men glad and wise,
With loving-kindness in their hearts,
And knowledge in their eyes.

"And ye shall be man's counselors
That neither rest nor sleep,
To cheer the lonely, lift the frail,
And solace them that weep.
And ever on his wandering trail
Your watch-fires ye shall keep;

THE ANGELS OF MAN

"Till in the far years he shall find
The country of his quest,
The empire of the open truth,
The vision of the best,
Foreseen by every mother saint
With her new-born on her breast."

THE ROUGH RIDER

THERE lift the peaks of purple,
Where dip the dusty trails,
Where gleaming, teeming cities
Lie linked by shining rails,
By shadow-haunted camp-fire,
Beneath the great white dome,
In saddle and in council
Intrepid and at home,

Who is the hardy figure
Of virile fighting strain,
With valor and conviction
In heart, and hand, and brain?
Sprung from our old ideals
To serve our later needs,
He is the modern Roundhead,
The man who rides and reads.

No pomp of braid and feathers,
No flash of burnished gear,
He wears the plainsman's outfit
Sufficient and severe.
With no imperial chevron
Upon his khaki sleeve,
He thinks by no made doctrine,
He speaks by no man's leave.

THE ROUGH RIDER

The breed and creed and schooling
Of Harvard and the plains,
Six hundred years of fighting
For freedom in his veins,
Let no one think to wheedle,
To buy, coerce, nor cheat,
The man who loves the open,
The man who knows the street.

He rides not for vain glory,
He fights not for low gain,
But that the range of freedom
Unravaged shall remain.
As plain as Bible language
And open as the day,
He challenges injustice,
And bids corruption stay.

Take up, who will, the challenge;
Stand pat on graft and greed;
Grow sleek on others' labor,
Surfeit on others' need;
Let paid and bloodless tricksters
Devise a legal way
Our common right and justice
"To sell, deny, delay."

THE ROUGH RIDER

Not yesterday nor lightly
We came to know that breed;
Our quarrel with that cunning
Is old as Runnymede.
We saw enfranchised insult
Deploy in kingly line,
When broke our sullen fury
On Rupert of the Rhine.

At Newbury and Worcester,
Edgehill and Marston Moor,
We got the stubborn courage
To dare and to endure.
From Ireton and Cromwell
We learned the sword and rein;
Free speech by truth made fearless,
From Hampden, Pym, and Vane.

A thousand years in peril,
By privilege oppressed,
With loss beyond requital,
Unflinching in our quest,
We sought and bought our freedom
And bore it oversea;
To keep it still unblighted,
We rode with Grant and Lee.

THE ROUGH RIDER

Now, masking raid and rapine
In debonair disguise,
The foe we thought defeated
Deludes our careless eyes,
Entrenched in law and largess
And the vested wrong of things,
Cloaking a fouler treason
Than any faithless king's.

He takes our life for wages,
He holds our land for rent,
He sweats our little children
To swell his cent per cent ;
With secret grip and levy
On every crumb we eat,
He drives our sons to thieving,
Our daughters to the street.

He lightly sells his honor,
He boldly shames our pride,
And makes our cause a scandal
For the nations to deride.
So crafty, yet so craven !
One whisper through the mart
Can send him to his coffers
With panic in his heart.

THE ROUGH RIDER

With no such feeble rancor
As envy moves to hate,
No ignorant detraction
Of goodly things and great,
But with the wrath unbridled
Of patriots betrayed,—
Of workers duped by brokers,
Of brothers unafraid,—

Against the grim defenses
Where might and murrain hide,
Unswerving to the issue
Loose-reined and rough we ride
Full tardily, to rescue
Our heritage from wrong,
And stablsh it on manhood,
A thousand times more strong.

Comes now the fearless Message,
The leader, and the time
For every man to muster
For honor or for crime.
Who would not ride beside him
Into the toughest fight—
For freedom, the republic,
And everlasting right!

THE SPIRIT IN ARMS

(AN INCIDENT OF 1675)

WHEN the just ire of England
Arose in daring might
Against the perfidious Stuart,
To uphold a diviner right,
“Let kings learn,” said her Commons,
“Their duty once for all,”
And sent the Lord’s anointed
To the headsman of Whitehall.

But strange are the shifts for freedom,
Heavy tradition’s hand,
And the days of the avenger
Were not long in the land.
No sooner another Stuart
Was safe on the throne once more,
Than his father’s judges were outlawed,
Hunted from door to door.

Two oversea for safety
To wild New England fled,
To haunt her forest borders,
With a price upon each head.
Harried from hiding to hiding,
Eating their bread in haste,
By many a hearth and camp-fire
Their unresting trail was traced.

THE SPIRIT IN ARMS

To-day in sleepy Hadley,
In its wide, green-shaded street,
They will point you out a dwelling
Was the regicides' retreat.
Here between ranks of homesteads
Their public common was made
For pasture and pleasure, protected
From Indian pillage and raid.

Deep in the seeding grasses
The arching elm trees stand,
Under the blue of August,
With peace over all the land.
On such a day in summer
Seasons and seasons ago,
On this lovely Puritan haven
Descended the stealthy foe.

The people were all at worship,
When a sudden fiendish yell
Broke on the fast-day stillness;
They knew what it meant full well.
Forth rushed the men from the meeting
(Armed were they always then),
To find their quiet Main Street
Swarming with painted men.

THE SPIRIT IN ARMS

Trapped, for the instant panic
Unmanning the stoutest there,
Drove them back to the doorway;
Disaster was in the air.
They saw their wives and children
Given to knife and brand,
And the blood ran back for a moment
From every hardy hand.

Mazed by the din and horror,
Stampeded by savage war,
Where was the spirit that triumphed
At Naseby and Dunbar?
Suddenly there before them,
Taking command, was seen
A thrilling resolute presence,
With heroic right in his mien.

At the call of that confident leader
Their sickened hearts grew bold,
And they thought how the Lord had smitten
The Midianites of old.
Then did the Puritan spirit
Come back to them where they stood,
And they fell on the shrieking Nipmucks
And drove them back to the wood.

THE SPIRIT IN ARMS

But when the rout was over,
Ere the sweat was wiped away
From the tanned and toil-worn faces
In thankfulness that day,
They turned to behold the stranger
Who had saved them from worse than death,
And the spirit in arms had vanished,
He had come and gone like a breath.

Had they but looked on a vision?
Or, seeing them too sore tried,
Had the Lord sent His angel among them?
It was Goffe the regicide.
He had seen from his place of hiding
The redskins creeping down,
Malignant shapes in the shadows,
On the unoffending town.

And quick to the call of outrage,
He who could have no part
In the open life of his fellows
Had come to strengthen their heart.
The intrepid soldier of justice
Once more had unsheathed his sword
To defend the rights of a people,
Ere he passed to the great award.

THE PURITAN CAPTAIN

I SAW in Newtowne lately a vision of the Spring,—
The glory of New England come back with blade
and wing.

First came the sturdy willows, in coats of greenish grey
They marched beside the river in jubilant array;
And then along the roadsides where whitening orchards
lean,

The pomp of golden hedges, with bannerings of green;
In deepest garden corners, bringing the wildwood near,
I saw the mystic trillium and the violet appear.

The far-off woodlands floated a mist of greyish blue,
With here and there the sanguine of maples showing
through,—

The careless tinge of valor, the tatters of romance,
Inwoven in the habit of sober circumstance.

Through Craigie Street and Brattle the lilacs brushed
the eaves,

Old gables stood transfigured in the miracle of leaves.
And where I passed at sundown under the twilight star,
Musing of those dead people who made us what we are,

From a colonial doorway, brass-knockered, prim and white,
Stepped forth a valiant figure, and in the uncertain light
Came down the sanded footpath with free imperious
stride,

His classic cloak about him, his good sword at his side,

THE PURITAN CAPTAIN

Uncompromising purpose in every move and line,
And in the clean-bred features a temper proud and fine.
His belted coat was homespun, his hat was steeple-
crowned;
He walked and looked about him as one who makes a
round.

A touch of old-world breeding both gracious and austere
In habit and deportment held me as he drew near.
“Good evening, Sir,” he greeted the stranger passing by,
“It is a pleasant evening.” “It is, indeed,” said I.
At once his kindly manner had put me at my ease;
And as he stood there under the arch of lilac trees
Smiling at my amazement, I felt a kinship rise
To meet the thoughtful forehead, droll mouth, and fear-
less eyes.

My heart warmed of a sudden with deep ancestral fires.
Here were the very features and fervor of my sires.
He calmly spoke, this Pilgrim, half soldier, half divine,
Beneath whose grim demeanor I knew the soul benign.
“So God’s eternal springtime comes back to earth once
more,
His messenger of beauty to each New England door.
Rejoice ye in that message! I long ago but heard
Stern oracles of goodness, high callings of the word.

THE PURITAN CAPTAIN

"I did not break Charles Stuart, to let the godless rule.
I did not raise up Cromwell, to tolerate the fool.
And I who fronted Andros the tyrant in Cornhill
And sent him back to cover, am with my people still.
Long, long I fought and suffered the blight of heinous
things,—

The insolence of priesthoods, the arrogance of kings.
Against uncurbed oppression I drove with pike and
sword;

And in the cry for justice I knew my spirit's Lord.

"I did not stop to quibble upon the path I chose.
When came the need for freedom, in freedom's name I
rose,

To champion ideals that save the world to-day.

Though men account me nothing, my strength shall be
their stay.

But while among my people, made strong in peace, I find
Those things for which I battled, clean life and open
mind,

I miss the one fine treasure for which the heathen strove,
The light of happy faces made luminous with love.

"For I who fought so fiercely in my relentless youth
For righteousness of conduct, have come to know this
truth:

Ye cannot free man's spirit and leave his senses bound,
Nor leave unused in heaven the joyance of the ground.

THE PURITAN CAPTAIN

Ye shall forego not, therefore, the magic of the spring,
Nor miss one pang of rapture the pagan year can bring;
But build the fairer wisdom that shall emerge at length
Into immortal manhood, whose joy shall be its strength.

“Strive on; still waits perfection; the good fight is not
done,

Though we have stretched our borders into the setting
sun.

Mistake not great possessions nor might of hand and
brain

For hostages of gladness; seek first the surer gain,—

The lightsome heart and sweetness that to the spring be-
long,

The shine on dappled waters that move both deep and
strong.”

I glanced round as he pointed to where the river shone,
And when I turned to question him further, he was gone.

A NEW ENGLAND THANKSGIVING

IT is the mellow season
When gold enchantment lies
On stream and road and woodland,
To gladden soul's surmise.
The little old grey homesteads
Are quiet as can be,
Among their stone-fenced orchards
And meadows by the sea.

Here lived the men who gave us
The purpose that holds fast,
The dream that nerves endeavor,
The glory that shall last.
Here strong as pines in winter
And free as ripening corn,
Our faith in fair ideals—
Our fathers' faith—was born.

Here shone through simple living,
With pride in word and deed,
And consciences of granite,
The old New England breed.
With souls assayed by hardship,
Illumined, self-possessed,
Strongly they lived, and left us
Their passion for the best.

A NEW ENGLAND THANKSGIVING

On trails that cut the sunset,
Above the last divide,
The vision has not vanished,
The whisper has not died.
From Shasta to Katahdin,
Blue Hill to Smoky Ridge,
Still stand the just convictions
That stood at Concord Bridge.

Beneath our gilded revel,
Behind our ardent boast,
Above our young impatience
To value least and most,
Sure as the swinging compass
To serve at touch of need,
Square to the world's four corners,
Abides their fearless creed.

Still fired with wonder-working,
Intolerant of peers,
Impetuous and sanguine
After the hundred years,
In likeness to our fathers,
Beyond the safe-marked scope
Of reason and decorum,
We jest and dare and hope.

A NEW ENGLAND THANKSGIVING

Thank we the Blood that bred us,
Clear fibre and clean strain—
The Truth which straightly sighted
Lets no one swerve again.
And may almighty Goodness
Give us the will to be
As sweet as upland pastures,
And strong as wind at sea.

IN GOLD LACQUER

GOLD are the great trees overhead,
And gold the leaf-strewn grass,
As though a cloth of gold were spread
To let a seraph pass.
And where the pageant should go by,
Meadow and wood and stream,
The world is all of lacquered gold,
Expectant as a dream.

Against the sunset's burning gold,
Etched in dark monotone
Behind its alley of grey trees
And gateposts of grey stone,
Stands the Old Manse, about whose eaves
An air of mystery clings,
Abandoned to the lonely peace
Of bygone ghostly things.

In molten gold the river winds
With languid sweep and turn,
Beside the red-gold wooded hill
Yellowed with ash and fern.
The streets are tiled with gold-green shade
And arched with fretted gold,
Ecstatic aisles that richly thread
This minster grim and old.

IN GOLD LACQUER

The air is flecked with filtered gold,—
The shimmer of romance
Whose ageless glamour still must hold
The world as in a trance,
Pouring o'er every time and place
Light of an amber sea,
The spell of all the gladsome things
That have been or shall be.

MEMORIAL DAY

(NEW ENGLAND)

ONCE more over relics of winter the willows all gold
Wave odorous plumes of enchantment, the fern-
heads unfold

In forgotten places, as fresh as when Pan long ago
Might pass through the bird-haunted woodlands, or linger
to blow

On his pure keen pipe by the river. The wild cherry
bough.

Is robed for the white celebration of memory now.
Old orchards a maze of pink-white with black stems
showing through,

Swamp alder and hill-loving birch all betasseled anew,
And ruddy wing-flowering maples,—the year is abloom,
Each dooryard a heaven of lilac, each breeze a perfume.
And hark to the small yellow warbler uplifting his voice,
So serene, so intense, so unstified! Who could not re-
joice

With the splendid oncoming of glory? Tall beech trees
are crowned;

Blue violets spring under foot in the magical ground;
And at twilight the frogs will fife up one by one till they
fill

The whole dome of dusk with their choral triumphant,
to thrill

MEMORIAL DAY

And transmute to an impulse of gladness the sob in each
throat;

As we with proud-spirited music help, too, to denote
And enhance the beneficent wonder, the power of earth
At her sorcery still, bringing ever new triumphs to birth
For the battle-bruised soul, the supreme one, desiring
nought

Save that always her truest and goodliest dreams should
be wrought

Into loveliness out of this life-stuff.

So all things alive,

Birds and winds and the sensitive flowers, persist and
survive

With joy unabated, with banners unstruck to the frost,
To remind us no beauty can perish, no effort be lost,
No ardor diminished forever, nor purpose lack room
To accomplish its utmost ideal! As all things resume
Their unfulfilled tasks of perfection, each after its need,
Shall the heart cease from longing, the mind from its
loftiest creed,

Or the senses refuse their 'due service? Behold we arise
From failure, mistake, and regret, putting on the fresh
guise

Of a use no disaster can ruin, the ultimate test
When endeavor shall gain all it dreamed of the infinite
best,—

MEMORIAL DAY

The little-regarded and common made great and sublime,
The eternal arrested and fashioned in space and in time.

Then sound a new note on the bugles, unmuffle the
drums,

Sing hymns of exulting, proud thanks for the uplift that
comes

From the thought of our heroes, resurging like sap in the
bough

Through hearts sorrow-hardened and faint, but rehu-
manized now

By the hand-clasp and rally of loved ones for whom we
in trust

Hold sacred ideals bequeathed us from out of the dust
Of battle fields holy. And keep we unfettered and fine
The faith which sustained our strong brothers that truth
the divine

Shall unfurl her peace colors, triumphant as blossom and
spray,

Bedecking the earth with fresh gladness, and generous
as they.

DECORATION DAY

(THE CAPITOL, WEST FRONT)

STAND here in the shadow of the Capitol,
And let your eyes range down across the city,
Where marble buildings rise out of a sea
Of tree-tops, and the Monument floats up
All rose and lilac in the morning light,
A thing of magic by the Potomac shore.

Across the river on the wooded bank
Where that colonial portico gleams white,
Is the nation's hallowed ground,—their resting-place
Who gave their lives up gladly for the truth,
Each, as he deemed, a soldier of the right,
Impassioned by the justice of his cause.

And hark, above the car-bells and the cries,
A band is playing! Troops are on the move.
Far down the Avenue a column wheels
To pass the pillared Treasury, on the way
To honor its dead heroes sleeping there
On the heights of Arlington ten thousand strong.

There rests my old friend in his soldier's grave,—
Old grim idealist with the tender heart,
The grizzled head, grey eye, and scanty speech,

DECORATION DAY

And hand that never faltered in the fight
Through all the rough work of a long campaign.
God keep you, General, with the heroes gone!

In many a place through all the land to-day,
Mourners will come, and with hands full of flowers
Pay loving honor to the valiant dead
Who gave their last breath for the cause they loved,
For liberty and justice, and flinched not
To pay the utmost for their noble dream.

And you, O fond and forgetful ones
Who have no grave to tend for all your loss,
No sacred spot whereat your love may kneel,
But must in silence let the proud tears spring,
Keeping the lonely vigil of the heart,
While the flags flutter and the dead-march plays;

Behold for you the consoling rain shall fall
In odorous assuaging woodland showers,
And wild wood-flowers spring up to deck the ground
Wherever early summer passes now;
And in far valleys where no bugles peal
Shy birds will sing their requiems for your dead.

DECORATION DAY

Therefore, take courage, seeing all natural things
Are not left desolate, but lovely earth
Transmutes each scar and sorrow to her gain,
And from the flux of time and growth renews
Her seasons of indomitable joy,
And breeds new beauty each reviving year.

Let us too live with gladness, and become
A part of that which never can be lost,
But must be merged forever with new power,
The urge, the aspiration, and the gleam,—
All that is infinite and divine in man,
The eternal rescued from mortality.

Let us not doubt, but with an unvexed mind
Bring truth to pass with beauty and with good,
One and sufficient in the last event,
The work made perfect by the loving hand,
The fair ideal translated into fact;
And heaven can not be far from this our world.

And so we turn from memory to-day
To the fresh tasks, splendid heroic toil,
Triumphs of knowledge and beneficence,
And victories unblemished by regret;
With the untroubled confidence of strength
We go to build the commonwealth of peace.

ST. MICHAEL'S STAR

(A HYMN FOR LABOR DAY)

IN the pure solitude of dusk
One star is set to shine
Above the sundown's dying rose,
A lamp before a shrine.
It is the star of Michael lit
In the minster of the sun,
That every toiling hand may give
Thanks for the day's work done.

For when the almighty word went forth
To bid creation be,—
The glimmering star-tracks on the blue,
The tide-belts on the sea,—
Perfect as planned, from Michael's hand
The lasting hills arose,
Their bases on the poppiéd plain,
Their peaks in bannered snows.

Cedar and thorn and oak were born;
Green fiddleheads uncurled
In the spring woods; gold addertongues
Came forth to glad the world;—
The magic of the punctual seeds,
Each with its pregnant powers,
As the lord Michael fashioned them
To keep their days and hours.

ST. MICHAEL'S STAR

Frail fins to ride the monstrous tide,
Soft wings to poise and gleam,
He formed the pageant tribe by tribe
As vivid as a dream.

And still must his beneficence
Renew, create, sustain,
The sorcery of the wind and sun,
The alchemy of the rain.

Teeming with God, the kindly sod
Yearns through the summer days
With the mute eloquence of flowers,
Its only means of praise.
At dusk and dawn the tranquil hills
Throb to the song of birds,
And all the dim blue silence thrills
To transport not of words.

For earth must breed to spirit's need,
Clay to the finer clay,
That soul through sense find recompense
And rapture on her way.
And man, from dust and dreaming wrought,
To all things must impart
The trend and likeness of his thought,
The passion of his heart.

ST. MICHAEL'S STAR

The love and lore he shall acquire
To word and deed must dare;
Resemblances of God his sire
His voice and mien must bear.
His children's children shall portray
The skill which he bestows
On living; and what life must mean
His craftsman's instinct knows.

Line upon line and tone by tone,
The visioned form he gives
To sound and color, wood and stone,
Takes loveliness and lives.
He sees his project's soaring hope
Grow substance, and expand
To measure a diviner scope
Beneath his patient hand.

To pencil, brush, and burnisher
His wizardry he lends,
And to the care of lathe and loom
His secret he commends.
In hues and forms and cadences
New beauty he instills,
A brother by the right of craft
To Michael of the hills.

EASTER EVE

IF I should tell you I saw Pan lately down by the
 shallows of Silvermine,
Blowing an air on his pipe of willow, just as the moon
 began to shine;
Or say that, coming from town on Wednesday, I met
 Christ walking in Ponus Street;
You might remark, "Our friend is flighty! Visions, for
 want of enough red meat!"

Then let me ask you. Last December, when there was
 skating on Wampanaw,
Among the weeds and sticks and grasses under the hard
 black ice I saw
An old mud-turtle poking about, as if he were putting
 his house to rights,
Stiff with the cold perhaps, yet knowing enough to pre-
 pare for the winter nights.

And here he is on a log this morning, sunning himself as
 calm as you please.
But I want to know, when the lock of winter was sprung
 of a sudden, who kept the keys?
Who told old nibbler to go to sleep safe and sound with
 the lily roots,
And then in the first warm days of April—out to the
 sun with the greening shoots?

EASTER EVE

By night a flock of geese went over, honking north on the
trails of air,

The spring express—but who despatched it, equipped with
speed and cunning care?

Hark to our bluebird down in the orchard trolling his
chant of the happy heart,

As full of light as a theme of Mozart's—but where did
he learn that more than art?

Where the river winds through grassy meadows, as sure
as the south wind brings the rain,

Sounding his reedy note in the alders, the starling comes
back to his nest again.

Are these not miracles? Prompt you answer: "Merely
the prose of natural fact;

Nothing but instinct plain and patent, born in the crea-
tures, that bids them act."

Well, I have an instinct as fine and valid, surely, as that
of the beasts and birds,

Concerning death and the life immortal, too deep for
logic, too vague for words.

No trace of beauty can pass or perish, but other beauty
is somewhere born;

No seed of truth or good be planted, but the yield must
grow as the growing corn.

EASTER EVE

Therefore this ardent mind and spirit I give to the glowing days of earth,
To be wrought by the Lord of life to something of lasting import and lovely worth.
If the toil I give be without self-seeking, bestowed to the limit of will and power,
To fashion after some form ideal the instant task and the waiting hour,

It matters not though defeat undo me, though faults betray me and sorrows scar,
Already I share the life eternal with the April buds and the evening star.
Our minister here, entrenched in doctrine, may know no doubt upon Easter Eve.
And when it comes to the crucial question, Doctor, you skeptic, you too believe!

RESURGAM

LO, now comes the April pageant
And the Easter of the year.
Now the tulip lifts her chalice,
And the hyacinth his spear;
All the daffodils and jonquils
With their hearts of gold are here.
Child of the immortal vision,
What hast thou to do with fear?

When the summons wakes the impulse,
And the blood beats in the vein,
Let no grief thy dream encumber,
No regret thy thought detain.
Through the scented bloom-hung valleys,
Over tillage, wood and plain,
Comes the soothing south wind laden
With the sweet impartial rain.

All along the roofs and pavements
Pass the volleying silver showers,
To unfold the hearts of humans
And the frail unanxious flowers.
Breeding fast in sunlit places,
Teeming life puts forth her powers,
And the migrant wings come northward
On the trail of golden hours.

RESURGAM

Over intervale and upland
Sounds the robin's interlude
From his tree-top spire at evening
Where no unbeliefs intrude,
Every follower of beauty
Finds in the spring solitude
Sanctuary and persuasion
Where the mysteries still brood.

•

Now the bluebird in the orchard,
A warm sighing at the door,
And the soft haze on the hillside,
Lure the houseling to explore
The perennial enchanted
Lovely world and all its lore;
While the early tender twilight
Breathes of those who come no more.

By full brimming river margins
Where the scents of brush fires blow,
Through the faint green mist of springtime,
Dreaming glad-eyed lovers go,
Touched with such immortal madness
Not a thing they care to know
More than those who caught life's secret
Countless centuries ago.

RESURGAM

In old Egypt for Osiris,
Putting on the green attire,
With soft hymns and choric dancing
They went forth to greet the fire
Of the vernal sun, whose ardor
His earth children could inspire;
And the ivory flutes would lead them
To the slake of their desire.

In remembrance of Adonis
Did the Dorian maidens sing
Linus songs of joy and sorrow
For the coming back of spring,—
Sorrow for the wintry death
Of each irrevocable thing,
Joy for all the pangs of beauty
The returning year could bring.

Now the priests and holy women
With sweet incense, chant and prayer,
Keep His death and resurrection
Whose new love bade all men share
Immortality of kindness,
Living to make life more fair.
Wakened to such wealth of being,
Who would not arise and dare?

RESURGAM

Seeing how each new fulfillment
Issues at the call of need
From infinitudes of purpose
In the core of soul and seed,
Who shall set the bounds of puissance
Or the formulas of creed?
Truth awaits the test of beauty,
Good is proven in the deed.

Therefore, give thy spring renaissance,—
Freshened ardor, dreams and mirth,—
To make perfect and replenish
All the sorry fault and dearth
Of the life from whose enrichment
Thine aspiring will had birth;
Take thy part in the redemption
Of thy kind from bonds of earth.

So shalt thou, absorbed in beauty,
Even in this mortal clime
Share the life that is eternal,
Brother to the lords of time,—
Virgil, Raphael, Gautama,—
Builders of the world sublime.
Yesterday was not earth's evening,
Every morning is our prime.

RESURGAM

All that can be worth the rescue
From oblivion and decay,—
Joy and loveliness and wisdom,—
In thyself, without dismay
Thou shalt save and make enduring
Through each word and act, to sway
The hereafter to a likeness
Of thyself in other clay.

Still remains the peradventure,
Soul pursues an orbit here
Like those unreturning comets,
Sweeping on a vast career,
By an infinite directrix,
Focussed to a finite sphere,—
Nurtured in an earthly April,
In what realm to reappear?

AT THE MAKING OF MAN

*F*IRST all the host of Raphael
In liveries of gold,
Lifted the chorus on whose rhythm
The spinning spheres are rolled,—
The Seraphs of the morning calm
Whose hearts are never cold.

He shall be born a spirit,
Part of the soul that yearns,
The core of vital gladness
That suffers and discerns,
The stir that breaks the budding sheath
When the green spring returns,—

The gist of power and patience
Hid in the plasmic clay,
The calm behind the senses,
The passionate essay
To make his wise and lovely dream
Immortal on a day.

The soft Aprilian ardors
That warm the waiting loam
Shall whisper in his pulses
To bid him overcome,
And he shall learn the wonder-cry
Beneath the azure dome.

AT THE MAKING OF MAN

And though all-dying nature
Should teach him to deplore,
The ruddy fires of autumn
Shall lure him but the more
To pass from joy to stronger joy,
As through an open door.

He shall have hope and honor,
Proud trust and courage stark,
To hold him to his purpose
Through the unlighted dark,
And love that sees the moon's full orb
In the first silver arc.

And he shall live by kindness
And the heart's certitude,
Which moves without misgiving
In ways not understood,
Sure only of the vast event,—
The large and simple good.

*Then Gabriel's host in silver gear
And vesture twilight blue,
The spirits of immortal mind,
The warders of the true,
Took up the theme that gives the world
Significance anew.*

AT THE MAKING OF MAN

He shall be born to reason,
And have the primal need
To understand and follow
Wherever truth may lead,—
To grow in wisdom like a tree
Unfolding from a seed.

A watcher by the sheepfolds,
With wonder in his eyes,
He shall behold the seasons,
And mark the planets rise,
Till all the marching firmament
Shall rouse his vast surmise.

Beyond the sweep of vision,
Or utmost reach of sound,
This cunning fire-maker,
This tiller of the ground,
Shall learn the secrets of the suns
And fathom the profound.

For he must prove all being
Sane, beauteous, benign,
And at the heart of nature
Discover the divine,—
Himself the type and symbol
Of the eternal trine.

AT THE MAKING OF MAN

He shall perceive the kindling
Of knowledge, far and dim,
As of the fire that brightens
Below the dark sea-rim,
When ray by ray the splendid sun
Floats to the world's wide brim.

And out of primal instinct,
The lore of lair and den,
He shall emerge to question
How, wherefore, whence, and when,
Till the last frontier of the truth
Shall lie within his ken.

*Then Michael's scarlet-suited host
Took up the word and sang;
As though a trumpet had been loosed
In heaven, the arches rang;
For these were they who feel the thrill
Of beauty like a pang.*

He shall be framed and balanced
For loveliness and power,
Lithe as the supple creatures,
And colored as a flower,
Sustained by the all-feeding earth,
Nurtured by wind and shower,

AT THE MAKING OF MAN

To stand within the vortex
Where surging forces play,
A poised and pliant figure
Immutable as they,
Till time and space and energy
Surrender to his sway.

He shall be free to journey
Over the teeming earth,
An insatiable seeker,
A wanderer from his birth,
Clothed in the fragile veil of sense,
With fortitude for girth.

His hands shall have dominion
Of all created things,
To fashion in the likeness
Of his imaginings,
To make his will and thought survive
Unto a thousand springs.

The world shall be his province,
The principedom of his skill;
The tides shall wear his harness,
The winds obey his will;
Till neither flood, nor fire, nor frost,
Shall work to do him ill.

AT THE MAKING OF MAN

A creature fit to carry
The pure creative fire,
Whatever truth inform him,
Whatever good inspire,
He shall make lovely in all things
To the end of his desire.

ON PONUS RIDGE

I HEARD the voice of our mother planet murmur to-day as the south wind blew

Over the old Connecticut granite, up from the Sound and the rainy blue.

"What is your comment, wandering brother," said Ponus Ridge to the striding rain,

"Not on the new word, *Love one another*, but the harder text, *Ye shall rise again?*"

"Hast thou found out truth at the core of being, in thy long wandering to and fro?

Dost thou know what lurks beyond foreseeing in the endless rhythm of ebb and flow?"

"Much have I heard," said Rain, "of the babel and heated haste of the lordling Man,

Telling the wind his gorgeous fable; but who shall hurry or check the plan?

"I take small heed of the tales he mutters," the glittering copious rain ran on;

"My music drowns the words he utters; I make my bed where his town-lights shone.

I hear the drone of his church and college, humming like hives from roof to floor

With direful chant and delirious knowledge, as I pass foot-free by their open door.

ON PONUS RIDGE

"I have heard the vaunts of his daring dreamers, the
things foretold by his sons of might,
And watched him flaunt like the boreal streamers that
glow and fade in the arctic night.
I have seen the flare of his pageants kindled, the pride
of Carthage, the pomp of Tyre;
And even as I fell they sank and dwindled, beaten down
like a farm-boy's fire.

"The earth is my house, the spring my portal; I serve
without envy, debate or fear.
Though I pass in mist, am I less immortal than the great-
ening germ or the glowing sphere?
I come from the sea and I go to the sea; ten thousand
times have I risen again
From the welter and lift of eternity, to solace thy wait-
ing not in vain.

"My strength is loosed for thy brooks and rivers, by
lake and orchard, by wood and field;
My silver voice with a sob delivers the message fore-
telling a goodly yield.
I have quickened the joy in thy swelling breast, I have
sluiced the ache of thy breeding fire;
I have perished in transport and died with zest, to fill
the measure of thy desire.

ON PONUS RIDGE

"The seeds of life are of my sowing, the virile impulse,
the fertile gush,
The gist and start of all things growing; but thine is
the warmth and the pregnant hush.
The stir of joy is of my giving; a hint of perfection far
and fine
I speak as I pass to all things living; but the patient wisdom
and lore are thine."

Then the mother granite, grey, eternal, scarred, to the
careless eye uncouth,
Spoke in a language pure and vernal, solemn as beauty
and sweet as truth.
In the voice of the Ridge in her April season, through
the babble of streams and the calls of birds,
Under the rune I caught the reason, out of the murmur
I made the words.

"Nay, my comrade, I too must pass; though my fleeting
hours be ages long,
I abide in the end no more than the grass, than a puff
of smoke or a strain of song.
If I give myself to the moment's rapture of lilt and
leafage, shall I repine
That the joy I bestow escapes recapture, spent for the
beauty of branch and vine?"

ON PONUS RIDGE

“ Strong, unhurrying, unbelated, part of the slow sidereal
urge,

Patient and sure at heart I waited for life to throb and
its forms emerge.

While cosmic æons dawned and darkened, and mon-
strous drift and blast went by,

In my slow gestation I lay and harkened for soul to
question and sense to cry.

“ I am the ardent and ageless mother of all things human,
all things divine.

The ravaging snows may whirl and smother, the large
cold moon of November shine,

But safe in my soil the germs are sleeping that shall
awake when the time is come,

To prove the beneficence of my keeping, and don the
glory of fragrant bloom.

“ See my young willows in sunlight lifting their silver
lances against the blue,

And here where the matted leaves are rifting, the hoods
of the blood-root breaking through.

Soon in the sheltered sun-warmed places, out of my an-
cient enchanted mould,

Frail spring-beauties will lift their faces, and adder-
tongues put forth their gold.

ON PONUS RIDGE

“ Hark to my minstrel, beyond the boulders down in the
swamp,—on time, no fear!—

In his sable coat with scarlet shoulders, with his husky
flute that is good to hear.

And hark again, in the long Aprilian dusk on the marsh
to my piper's cry.

To-night but one, to-morrow a million will lift my heart
on their chorus high.

“ Now Sirius low in the west is leaning, Arcturus lifts
on the eastern rim,—

The poise, the order, the mighty meaning, creating beauty
from brim to brim.

Under the dust of seed and planet, the river music, the
starry light,

Am I in the midst, immortal granite, merging my
strength with the soul of night.

“ At morn I shall see from my stream-bed narrow the
wild geese flapping with honk and splash,

To steady and drive their Indian arrow north-by-east
for the Allegash.

And then the high clear note of gladness, the rallying
call of the golden-wing,

The solace of grief, the shame of sadness, the goodly far-
sent summons of spring.

ON PONUS RIDGE

"Here all day long I shall lie and ponder the teeming
life whereon I brood,
While the buds unfold, the low clouds wander, and all
things flow to rhythm and mood.
And seeing all form but the trace of motion, all beauty
the vestige of joy made plain,
Shall I stint my care and my devotion, to vex me with
counting the once or again?

"I take no measure, I keep no tally, of the budding
spray and the leafing bough,
Yet not a blossom in all the valley but is the pride of
my patience now.
In the hardwood groves where the sun lies mellow, the
purple hepaticas take the air.
I help the catkins to break and yellow; the greening
spring-runs are in my care.

"I loosen the sheaths of the bladed rushes, I lift the
sap in the spiral cells,
Till the first soft tinge through the woodland flushes,
and the crimson bud of the maple swells.
I nurse them to beauty hour by hour. And there by the
road in its grove of pine,
The little bare school with its dreams of power and
joy of knowledge,—that, too, is mine!"

THE MAN OF PEACE

(FEBRUARY 12TH, 1909)

WHAT winter holiday is this?
In Time's great calendar,
Marked in the rubric of the saints,
And with a soldier's star,
Here stands the name of one who lived
To serve the common weal,
With humor tender as a prayer
And honor firm as steel.

No hundred hundred years can dim
The radiance of his mirth,
That set unselfish laughter free
From all the sons of earth.
Unswerved through stress and scant success,
Out of his dreamful youth
He kept an unperturbed faith
In the almighty truth.

Born in the fulness of the days,
Up from the teeming soil,
By the world-mother reared and schooled
In reverence and toil,
He stands the test of all life's best
Through play, defeat, or strain;
Never a moment was he found
Unlovable nor vain.

THE MAN OF PEACE

Fondly we set apart this day,
And mark this plot of earth
To be forever hallowed ground
In honor of his birth,
Where men may come as to a shrine
And temple of the good,
To be made sweet and strong of heart
In Lincoln's brotherhood.

Here walked God's earth in modesty
The shadow that was man,
A shade of the divine that moved
Through His mysterious plan.
So must we fill the larger mould
Of wisdom, love, and power,
Fearless, compassionate, contained,
And masters of the hour,

As men found faithful to a task
Eternal, pressing, plain,
Accounting manhood more than wealth,
And gladness more than gain;
Distilling happiness from life,
As vigor from the air,
Not wresting it with ruthless hands,
Spoiling our brother's share.

THE MAN OF PEACE

Here shall our children keep alive
The passion for the right,—
The cause of justice in the world,
That was our fathers' fight.
For this the fair-haired stripling rode,
The dauntless veteran died,
For this we keep the ancient code
In stubbornness and pride.

O South, bring all your chivalry;
And West, give all your heart;
And East, your old untarnished dreams
Of progress and of art!
Bid waste and war to be no more,
Bid wanton riot cease;
At your command give Lincoln's land
To Paradise,—to peace.

CHAMPLAIN

(READ AT BURLINGTON, VERMONT, JULY, 1909)

WHEN the sweet Summer days
Come to New England, and the south wind plays
Over the forests, and the tall tulip trees
Lift up their chalices
Of delicate orange green
Against the blue serene;
When the chestnut crowns are full of flowers,
And the long hours
Are not too long
For the oriole's song;
When the wild roses blow
In blueberry pastures, and the Bobwhite's note
Calls us away
On the happy trail where every heart must go;
When the white clouds float
Through an ampler day,
Above the battlements of the Mountains Green,
Where the woods come down to the fields on every hand,
And the meadow-land
Breaks into ripples and swells
With the gold of the black-eyed daisies and lily-bells;
When the old sea lies mystical blue once more
Along the Pilgrim shore,
Crooning to stone-fenced pastures sweet with fern
Tales of the long ago and the far away;

CHAMPLAIN

And when to the hemlock solitudes return
The gold-voiced thrushes, and the high beach woods
Ring with enchantment as the twilight falls
Among the darkening hills;
And the new moonlight fills
The world with beauty and the soul with peace
And infinite release;
Is there any land that history recalls,
Bestowed by gods on mortals anywhere,
More goodly than New England or more fair?

On such a day three hundred years ago
By toilsome trails and slow,
But with the adventurer's spirit high aflame,
The great discoverer came,
Finding another Indies than he guessed
To reward his daring quest,
And fill the wonder-volume of Romance,—
The sailor of little Brouage, the founder of New France,
Sturdy, sagacious, plain
Samuel de Champlain.

On many a river and stream
The paddles of his Abenakis dip and gleam;
Their slim canoe-poles set and flash in the sun,
Where strong white waters run;

CHAMPLAIN

By many a portage, many a wooded shore,
They press on to explore
The unknown that leads them ever to the west;
And when at dusk their camp is made
Within the dense still shade,
The white shafts of the moonlight creep
About them while they sleep
On the earth's fragrant and untroubled breast.
Then on a day upon some marble rise
They stand in mute surmise,
And wonder, as they gaze
On the green wilderness in summer haze,
At a new paradise
Unrolled before their eyes.

What did he seek,
This hardy voyager with the steady hand,
And the sunburnt cheek?

Passage to India and the fabled land
So longed for and foretold,
Where rivers ran with gold,—
Man's fond far hope of unlaborious ease,
Miraculous wealth and benefits unearned,
For which he vainly yearned.

CHAMPLAIN

He found here no such place,
But in this new world again was face to face
With life's familiar laws and orders old,
Still to be followed, if we would fill the mould
Of our ideal,—a manhood that is free
With the soul's large and happy liberty.

As if God said to Man,
"Try once again my plan.
Here is a continent all new,
Take it and see once more what thou canst do.
The happiness which thy stormy heart desires
My will foresees, requires.
On the long road that lies
Across the centuries
To my perfection dimly understood,
Seek thou the almighty good,
The everlasting beautiful and true."

Men of New England, sons of pioneers,
And in your birthright peers
Of the world's masters, this is holy soil,
The divine ancestral dust from which we come,
Bringing our dream of justice, the high thought
Of a pure freedom for which our mothers wrought
In dreamful pride,
And our fathers lived and died
With unselfish toil.

CHAMPLAIN

Even as they willed,
We too must toil to build
The ideal state,
Which shall be strong without brutality,
And by its fine humanity be great.

This is no fairyland,
No Eldorado planned
For man's salvation. The law runs forth and back,
Immutable as the sun on his sidereal track,
Beneficent as the trees,
And as the noon profound:
Only with labor comes ease,
Only with wisdom comes joy,
And greatness comes not without love.

This is God's garden ground,
And we are the tillers thereof.
And the crop shall be women and men,
As ever of old,—
Not a pale city breed,
Bred between hunger and greed,
But a new cosmic race,
With the poise of the world in its mien,
The ineffable soul in its face,
Remembering the best that has been,
And its password, "The best that can be!"

CHAMPLAIN

No Mesopotamian valley, nor Eden age,
No long ago, nor by-and-by,
Is the place, is the time,
For the birth of the sublime
From the lovely and the sane.
But the time is now, and the place is here,
For life divine,
In July of the year
Nineteen hundred and nine,
In the Country of Champlain.

THE GOLDEN WEST

IN the golden dawn of the world,
When man emerged
From the mysterious East,
With the breath of life in his mouth,
And the tell-tale trace
Of the red clay still on his face.

He turned with inquisitive gaze,
A child of the light,
To follow the track of the sun
Through the void far blue,
Seeing it sink to rest
In a glorious golden West.

Then an unassuageable urge
Awoke in his blood,
The brooding spirit of Earth
Whispered a word in his heart,
And man went forth on the trail,
Knowing he should not fail.

II

And the slow centuries
Measured his toilsome march,
While ever his face was set

THE GOLDEN WEST

To lands that lie beyond
The going down of the sun,
Where endeavor's requital is won.

From Egypt and Greece and Tyre,
From Assyria and Rome,
With color and pomp and joy,
Laughter and chants and war,
Moved the great caravan
Of wandering man.

Conquering mountain and sea,
Spreading through forest and plain,
Crossing the outer flood,—
The rim of the ancient world,—
He passed over new domain
Like the hosts of sweeping rain.

Traversing prairie and wood,
Waterway, desert, and range,
At last by the ultimate shore
Of the ageless sea,
His pack-trains come to rest
In our golden West.

THE GOLDEN WEST

III

Here have the most high Ones,
The Overlords of the world,
The Archangels of man,
Brought their earth children at last,
To the happy land prepared
For those who have labored and dared.

O men and women born
Of the teeming and holy earth,
And led through the myriad years
By the impulse and vision divine,
Behold now what shall be done
With the heritage we have won?

Here with an empire to use,
Wealth beyond Solomon's dream,
And the balm and respite of peace,
In a garden of the world,
What is the news or the plan
Of Twentieth Century man?

IV

I heard the Sierras reply,
Rank after rank as they rose
Through the golden and violet light,

THE GOLDEN WEST

"The destined days are at hand,
When my children shall arise
And assume the heroic guise

"From the beginning designed
For the seraphs, and sons of earth.
They shall put off envy and fear,
And skulking merciless greed,
And be girded against all ills
With the vigor and poise of the hills.

"Here on this border of time
Where mighty morrows are born,
Emerging from ages of dream
And the dust of unreason and strife,
They shall grow wise and humane
With a gladness virile and sane.

"Primal in beauty and pride,
Christian in kindness and calm,
Modern in knowledge and skill,
Sons of the morning, arise—
Earth's awaited and best—
From the golden West!"

THE GATE OF PEACE

AH, who will build the city of our dream,
Where beauty shall abound and truth avail,
With patient love that is too wise for strife,
Blending in power as gentle as the rain
With the reviving earth on full spring days?
Who now will speed us to its gate of peace,
And reassure us on our doubtful road?

Three centuries ago a fearless man,
Yearning to set his people in the way,
Threw all his royal might into a plan
To found an ideal city that should give
Freedom to every instinct for the best,
From humblest impulse in his own domain
To rumored wisdom from the world's far ends.
Strengthened with ardor from a high resolve,
Beneath the patient smile of Indian skies
This fair dream flourished for a score of years,
Until the blight of evil touched its bloom
With fading, and transformed its vivid life
Into a ghost-flower of its fair design.

Now ruined nursery tower and gay boudoir,
A sad custodian of sacred tombs,
And scattered feathers from the purple wings
Of doves who reign in undisputed calm
Over this Eden of hope and fair essay,
Recall the valor of this ancient quest.

THE GATE OF PEACE

Great Akbar,—grandfather of Shah Jehan,
The artist Emperor of India
Who built the Taj for love of one held dear
Beyond all other women in the world,
And left that loveliest memorial,
The most supreme of wonders wrought by man,
To move for very joy all hearts to tears
Beholding how great beauty springs from love,—
Akbar the wisest ruler over Ind,
Grandson of Babar in whose veins were mixed
The blood of Tamerlane and Chinghiz Khan,
Who beat the Afghans and the Rajputs down
At Paniput and Buxar in Bengal,
Making himself the lord of Hindustan,
And with his restless Tartars founded there
The Mogul empire with its Moslem faith,
Its joyousness, enlightenment, and art,—
Akbar of all the sovereigns of the East
Is still most deeply loved and gladly praised.

For he who conquered with so strong a hand
Cabul, Kashmir, and Kandahar, and Sind,
Oudh and Orissa, Chitor and Ajmir,
With all their wealth to weld them into one,
Upholding justice with his sovereignty
Throughout his borders and imposing peace,
Was first and last a seeker after truth.

THE GATE OF PEACE

No craven unlaborious truce he sought,
But that great peace which only comes with light,
Emerging after chaos has been quelled
In some long struggle of enduring will,
To be a proof of order and of law,
Which cannot rest on falsehood nor on wrong,
But spreads like generous sunshine on the earth
When goodness has been gained and truth made clear,
At whatsoe'er incalculable cost.

Returning once with his victorious arms
And war-worn companies on the homeward march
To Agra and his court's magnificence,
From a campaign against some turbulent folk,
He came at evening to a quiet place
Near Sikri by the roadside through the woods,
Where there were many doves among the trees.

There Salim Chisti a holy man had made
His lonely dwelling in the wilderness,
Seeking perfection. And the solitude
Was sweet to Akbar, and he halted there
And went to Salim in his lodge and said,
"O man and brother, thy long days are spent
In meditation, seeking for the path

THE GATE OF PEACE

Through this great world's impediments to peace,
Here in the twilight with the holy stars
Or when the rose of morning breaks in gold;
Tell me, I pray, whence comes the gift of peace
With all its blessings for a people's need,
And how may true tranquillity be found
On which man's restless spirit longs to rest?"

And Salim answered, "Lord, most readily
In Allah's out-of-doors, for there men live
More truly, being free from false constraint,
For learning wisdom with a calmer mind.
For they who would find peace must conquer fear
And ignorance and greed,—the ravagers
Of spirit, mind, and sense,—and learn to live
Content beneath the shade of Allah's hand.
Who worships not his own will shall find peace."

Then Akbar answered, "I have set my heart
On making beauty, truth, and justice shine
As the ordered stars above the darkened earth.
Are not these also things to be desired,
And striven for with no uncertain toil?
And save through them whence comes the gift of peace?"

THE GATE OF PEACE

Then Salim smiled, and with his finger drew
In the soft dust before his door, and said,
" O king, thy words are true, thy heart most wise.
Thou also shalt find peace, as Allah wills,
Through following bravely what to thee seems best.
When any question, ' What is peace?' reply,
' The shelter of the Gate of Paradise,
The shadow of the archway, not the arch,
Within whose shade at need the poor may rest,
The weary be refreshed, the weak secure,
And all men pause to gladden as they go.' "

And Akbar pondered Salim Chisti's words.
Then turning to his ministers, he said,
" Here will I build my capital, and here
The world shall come unto a council hall,
And in a place of peace pursue the quest
Of wisdom and the finding out of truth,
That there be no more discord upon earth,
But only knowledge, beauty, and good will."

And it was done according to Akbar's word.
There in the wilderness as by magic rose
Futtehpur Sikri, the victorious city,
Of marble and red sandstone among the trees,

THE GATE OF PEACE

A rose unfolding in the kindling dawn.
Palace and mosque and garden and serai,
Bazaars and baths and spacious pleasure grounds,
By favor of Allah to perfection sprang.

Thus Akbar wrought to make his dream come true.
From the four corners of the world he brought
His master workmen, from Iran and Ind,
From wild Mongolia and the Arabian wastes;
Masons from Baghdad, Delhi, and Multan;
Dome builders from the North, from Samarkand;
Cunning mosaic workers from Kanauj;
And carvers of inscriptions from Shiraz;
And they all labored with endearing skill,
Each at his handicraft, to make beauty be.

When the first ax-blade on the timber rang,
The timid doves, as if foreboding ill,
Had fled from Sikri and its quiet groves.

But as he promised, Akbar sent and bade
The wise men of all nations to his court,
Brahman and Christian, Buddhist and Parsee,
Jain and stiff Mohammedan and Jew,
All followers of the One with many names,
Bringing the ghostly wisdom of the earth.

THE GATE OF PEACE

And so they came of every hue and creed.
From the twelve winds of heaven their caravans
Drew into Sikri as Akbar summoned them,
To spend long afternoons in council grave,
Sifting tradition for the seed of truth,
In the great mosque in Futtehpur at peace.
And Salim Chisti lived his holy life,
Beloved and honored there as Akbar's friend.

But light and changeable are the hearts of men.
Soon in that city dedicate to peace
Dissensions spread and rivalries grew rife,
Envy and bitterness and strife returned
Once more, and truth before them fled away.

Then Salim Chisti, coming to Akbar spoke,
"Lord, give thy servant leave now to depart
And follow where the fluttered wings have gone,
For here there is no longer any peace,
And truth cannot prevail where discord dwells."

"Nay then," said Akbar, "'tis not thou but I
Who am the servant here and must go hence.
I found thee master of this solitude,
Lord of the principedom of a quiet mind,
A sovereign vested in tranquillity,
And I have done thee wrong and stayed thy feet
From following perfection, with my horde

THE GATE OF PEACE

Of turbulent malcontents; and my loved dream
To build a city of abiding peace
Was but a vain illusion. Therefore now
This foolish people shall be driven forth
From this fair place, to live as they may choose
In disputance and wrangling longer still,
Until they learn, if Allah wills it so,
To lay aside their folly for the truth."

And as the king commanded, so it was.
More quickly than he came, with all his court
And hosts of followers he went away,
Leaving the place to solitude once more,—
A rose to wither where it once had blown.

To-day the all-kind unpolluted sun
Shines through the marble fret-work with no sound;
The winds play hide and seek through corridors
Where stately women with dark glowing eyes
Have laughed and frolicked in their fluttering robes;
The rose leaves drop with none to gather them,
In gardens where no footfall comes with eve,
Nor any lovers watch the rising moon;
And ancient silence, truer than all speech,
Still holds the secrets of the Council Hall,
Upon whose walls frescoes of many faiths
Attest the courtesy of open minds.

THE GATE OF PEACE

Before the last camp-follower was gone,
The doves returned and took up their abode
In the main gate of those deserted walls.
And in their custody this "Gate of Peace"
Bears still the grandeur of its origin,
Firing anew the wistful hearts of men
To brave endeavor with replenished hope,
Though since that time three hundred years ago,
The magic hush of those forsaken streets
And empty courtyards has been undisturbed
Save by the gentle whirring of grey wings,
With cooing murmurs uttered all day long,
And reverent tread of those from near and far,
Who still pursue the immemorial quest.

THE TWELFTH NIGHT STAR

IT is the bitter time of year
When iron is the ground,
With hasp and sheathing of black ice
The forest lakes are bound,
The world lies snugly under snow,
Asleep without a sound.

All the night long in trooping squares
The sentry stars go by,
The silent and unwearying hosts
That bear man company,
And with their pure enkindling fires
Keep vigils lone and high.

Through the dead hours before the dawn,
When the frost snaps the sill,
From chestnut-wooded ridge to sea
The earth lies dark and still,
Till one great silver planet shines
Above the eastern hill.

It is the star of Gabriel,
The herald of the Word
In days when messengers of God
With sons of men conferred,
Who brought the tidings of great joy
The watching shepherds heard;

THE TWELFTH NIGHT STAR

The mystic light that moved to lead
The wise of long ago,
Out of the great East where they dreamed
Of truths they could not know,
To seek some good that should assuage
The world's most ancient woe.

O well, believe, they loved their dream,
Those children of the star,
Who saw the light and followed it,
Prophetical, afar,—
Brave Gaspar, clear-eyed Melchior,
And eager Balthasar.

Another year slips to the void,
And still with omen bright
Above the sleeping doubting world
The day-star is alight,—
The waking signal flashed of old
In the blue Syrian night.

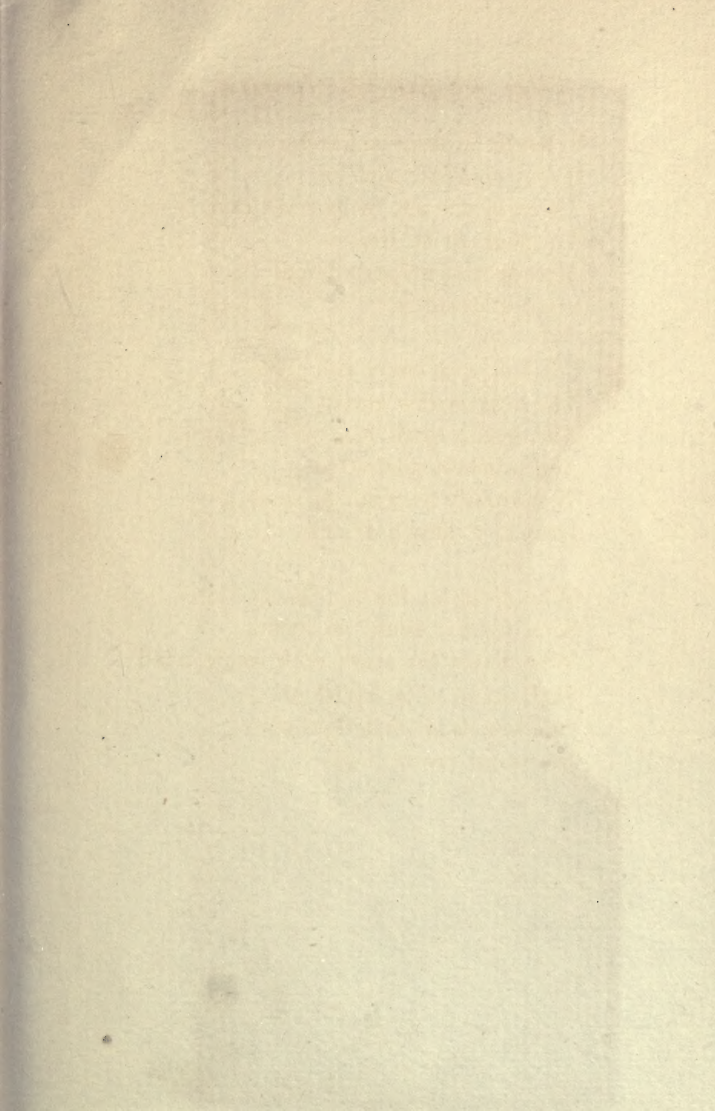
But who are now as wise as they
Whose faith could read the sign
Of the three gifts that shall suffice
To honor the divine,
And show the trend of common life
Ineffably benign?

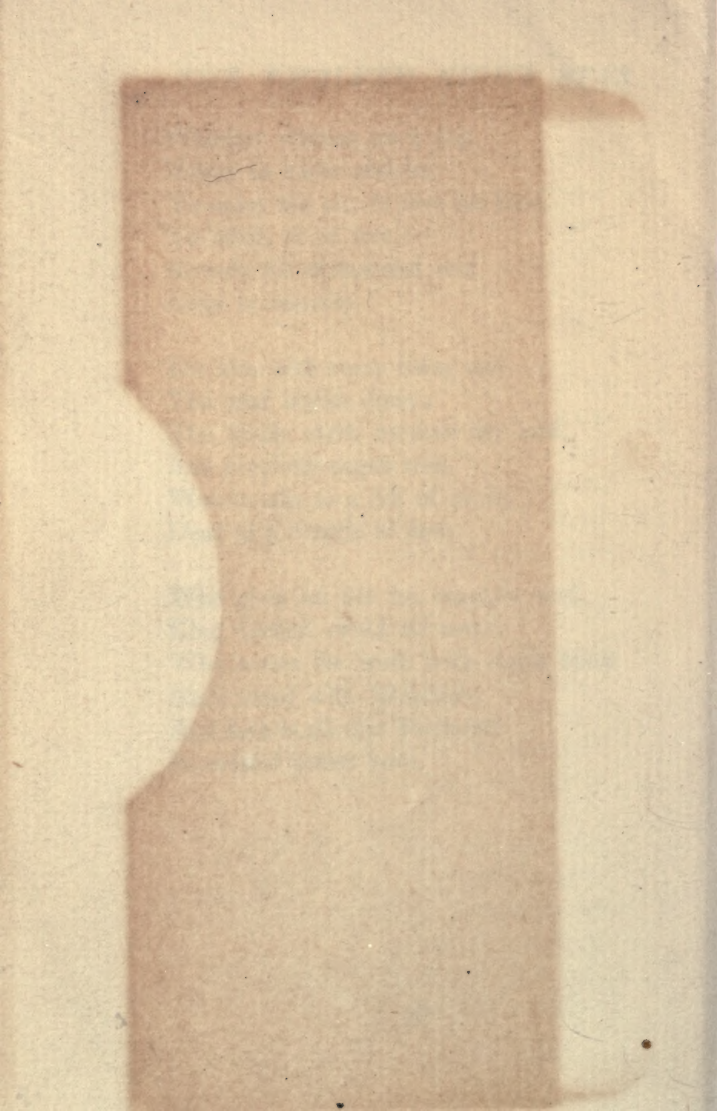
THE TWELFTH NIGHT STAR

Whoever wakens on a day
Happy to know and be,
To enjoy the air, to love his kind,
To labor, to be free,—
Already his enraptured soul
Lives in eternity.

For him with every rising sun
The year begins anew;
The fertile earth receives her lord,
And prophecy comes true,
Wondrously as a fall of snow,
Dear as a drench of dew.

Who gives his life for beauty's need,
King Gaspar could no more;
Who serves the truth with single mind
Shall stand with Melchior;
And love is all that Balthasar
In crested censer bore.





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Carman, Bliss

The rough rider, and other poems.

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